

JOINT VENTURE: SILICON VALLEY NETWORK

Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network grew out of a 1992 gathering at which over 1000 civic leaders discussed possible strategies for improving the region's economic well-being and quality of life. Joint Ventures incorporated as a nonprofit organization the following year and, with a 1999 budget of \$4.8 million, now fosters and mobilizes public-private partnerships around issues of key concern to local corporations and citizens. Its "value added" is the ability to influence actions at a scale that benefits the entire region.

Reflecting its entrepreneurial inclination, Joint Venture terms its 120+ funders as "investors". Most of its major investors, including such prominent firms as Cisco Systems, Intel and others are corporations that contribute from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and more annually.

Joint Ventures predicates its workforce programs on the view that the region's economic success creates a growing and changing demand for increasing the quality and quantity of the Silicon Valley workforce. In 1999, to highlight the need for a regional strategy for "growing our own" world-class workforce, Joint Venture secured services of A. T. Kearney, a management consulting firm, to analyze the supply of skilled high-tech workers and the demand created by area high-tech employers.

The resulting *Workforce Study* identified a workforce gap that “is costing seven major Silicon Valley clusters \$3-4 billion a year in incremental hiring and opportunity costs.”

In an effort to mobilize the regional system of institutions and programs supporting workforce development around a strategic approach to meeting common needs, Joint Ventures undertakes activities at three levels:

- Workforce Preparation, to grow the pipeline of future workers by building awareness of high tech careers among youth and their families, integrating new curricula into the schools;
- Workforce Development, to upgrade the skills of existing workers through support for development of regional training centers and other strategies;
- Workforce Collaborations, that “connect the dots” through strategic alliances among corporations and community-based organizations to aggregate and leverage the efforts of the various players in workforce development.

Workforce Preparation

Joint Venture has begun to address the awareness gap through outreach strategies that ‘grow the future workforce pipeline’ by promoting career awareness among youth and their families.

Workforce Development

In 1998, Joint Venture organized a Workforce Partnership that brought together key education and industry stakeholders who outlined long-term goals for addressing the most evident needs. The Workforce Partnership opted for a sectoral strategy focused on creating a homegrown, high-tech workforce in the valley within a number of specific industry clusters.

To this end, Joint Venture has begun assembling industry-based groups to look into the skill gaps that each cluster faces and to identify specific programs to address those gaps. Each industry cluster is identifying core competencies, prior to locating

and strengthening the ability of regional training centers to upgrade the skills of existing workers. This effort will include the profiling of jobs and building awareness of industry needs and skill requirements among students and teachers.

Joint Venture will also use those competencies as a basis for linking with secondary schools to develop career pathways, which could begin at the high school level and move into postsecondary education. Moreover, clearly articulated career pathways would serve current workers who move among jobs within the industry.

The industry/education consortium Joint Venture seeded in semiconductors has made the most progress thus far. A “working partnership” to establish a “benchmark of quality” for training related to skill gap areas, it has identified six key skill gaps, such as a shortage of manufacturing technicians. The consortium has identified a model community college curriculum for training manufacturing technicians.

The semiconductor manufacturing consortium—including two of six local school districts and community colleges—signals to education institutions that this curriculum is a benchmark for the type of training that is acceptable to industry.

In partnership with Mission Community College and San Jose State University, Joint Venture is involved in establishing a magnet training center for the semiconductor cluster. Eletroglas, Intel, Komag, national Semiconductor, Sematech, and Phillips are all major corporate sponsors. Programs like this demonstrate clear payoffs for Joint Venture investors. Because entering employees are better prepared, they need less on-site training and achieve higher productivity more quickly, at lower cost to the firm.

In a separate program, Joint Venture will soon launch a profession development

exchange program for community college faculty. Each summer Joint Venture plans to provide faculty with opportunities to partner with corporate sponsors to learn more about industry. The goal is to facilitate active connections between education and industry, premised on the belief that greater awareness on both sides will help to address the skills gap.

This description is from: Jobs for the Future, 1998. "Employer Intermediaries: A Briefing Paper, Prepared for the Planning Conference" The Employer Workforce Development Initiative: Partnering with Communities to Create a Workforce for the New Millenium". Boston, MA: Jobs for the Future.

WISCONSIN REGIONAL TRAINING PARTNERSHIP

The Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP) is a multi-union, multi-employer sectoral effort to link employers, workers and unions in the joint mission of improving worker training and preserving jobs in the Greater Milwaukee manufacturing industries.

History

The Wisconsin AFL-CIO, realizing that its displaced worker programs were a limited response to state economic problems, sought broader solutions by working with the Center on Wisconsin Strategy at the University of Wisconsin. Research revealed jobs could be retained in the metal working industry, but this would require a consortium of unions and employers. Endorsed by the Governor's Commission on Workforce Quality, the WRTP was organized by the Wisconsin AFL-CIO as a jointly governed labor-management organization. Since its founding in 1991 as a not-for-profit corporation, WRTP has grown to include 56 firms, 60,000 workers and 42 local and 14 international unions. Covering all manufacturing activity, it has been able to achieve an economy of scale by bringing partners together and by merging activities within the firms. An initial focus on incumbent workers can open the door for other opportunities, including school-to-work programming for youth, welfare-to-work help for unemployed workers and modernization for firms.

Organization

WTRP policy is set by a board consisting of equal numbers of representatives from major companies and labor representatives from the state labor federal and its industrial union affiliates. Implementation strategies are generated by managers and local union leaders, who participate in working groups formed around the policy areas of modernization, worker training, and the future workforce. The varied working groups, taskforces, and committees provide an ongoing forum for members to share their stories, identify advanced practices, develop pilot projects, benchmark skill requirements, create new tools, and advocate public policies.

The participatory process in which managers, union leaders, and their partners in education, government and the community learn from one another is key to expanding the scale and scope of the consortium. What generally happens it that members of a working group identify a recurrent problem—such as the inconsistency of on-the-job training—or a common objective—such as the development of a youth apprenticeship program—and then develop a strategy for addressing the issue. Firms represented in these meetings may become pilot sites.

Administratively, WTRP is a very small organization; staff is supported by funds variously provided by consultancies, area community colleges, and the state and federal departments of labor. WTRP program focus is regularly redirected by biannual surveys of some 500 union firms across the sate.

Activities

- ❑ **Incumbent worker training:** The principal commitment of WTRP firms is to the training of their existing workforce. This is accomplished through single or multi-

site workplace education centers. Over 4,500 workers attend these centers every year, which along with related programs in customized training, are supported by millions of dollars in firm investments. Most of the training and related services—e.g. assessment, counseling, confidential testing—are provided by a third party, such as one of the local technical colleges.

- **Future workforce preparation:** The aging of the workforce makes the problem of preparing the future workforce increasingly critical. As such, WRTP piloted the development of a youth apprenticeship program in manufacturing. WRTP also developed a model for entry-level training that provides jobs to successful graduates.
- **Modernization:** The third and most recent focus of the WRTP is on the development of the state's new manufacturing extension program for small firms.

This description of the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership was taken from two sources: "High Road Partnerships Report: Innovations in Building Good Jobs and Strong Communities" by the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute, and by "Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership" by Laura Dress, Joel Rogers, and Scott Zdrazil of the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Greater Cleveland Growth Association

JOB AND WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

The Job and Workforce Initiative (JWFI) was formed by Greater Cleveland Growth Association, the regional Chamber of Commerce, Cleveland Tomorrow, the Cleveland Foundation and the George Grund Foundation. JWFI is an employer-driven strategy for addressing key problems of workforce development in the greater Cleveland region. The Cleveland Development Foundation administers the initiative as a 501c(3) and affiliate of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association.

The Greater Cleveland Growth Association launched its project with a serious “community audit” to identify key needs in the local labor market and available resources. This effort included employer skill needs surveys, a regional inventory, benchmarking visits, commissioned studies, and an assessment of employment and training programs.

On this basis, JWFI has begun a series of programs, including technical training to address skills shortages.

Now, with a small grant from the Ford Foundation, JWFI is spearheading a planning process to design and fund a regional skill alliance for informational technology occupations. Partners in the initiative represent key stakeholders including employers, education and training providers, and workforce policy organizations. JWFI puts a special emphasis on a communications strategy to reach executives in the targeted industries.

METRO TECH

A WASHINGTON AREA TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE

Metro Tech is an employer-driven project created to address the shortage of qualified individuals with technology skills in the Washington metropolitan area. It is being funded by U.S. DOL for \$20,252,756 over a five-year period and has brought together an extensive and complex partnership. The project is governed by an eight member Management Team composed of representatives from the three regional High Tech Councils, the Greater Washington Board of Trade, lead workforce development agencies for the District, Virginia, and the state of Maryland, and the U.S. Department of Labor. It is staffed by the multiple Workforce Investment Boards within the region.

The project's origins were seeded six years ago with the large public sector layoffs impacting both federal workers and federal subcontractors. To effectively respond to these layoffs a regional cooperative effort was launched with Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Washington D.C. To implement the project, the different agencies involved needed to create a seamless regional system. This effort required resolving different policies and practices on unemployment insurance, support services, training and performance measures. Operationally it required reaching agreement on difficult issues of staffing, funds flow, governance, and roles and responsibilities.

More importantly for the project to successfully place the thousands of laid-off public employees it needed to develop strong partnerships with employers. The exploding growth of high technology companies in the region created labor shortages and skills shortages. This

provided an opportunity for developing service options that responded to the needs of these employers and the program's participants.

The success of the project led U.S. DOL to build upon this strong regional partnership to respond to two other pressing regional labor market issues: the shortage of skilled workers in the regional IT industry and the economic revitalization efforts of the District. This new effort, Metro Tech, was launched in March 2000.

The goals of Metro Tech are to serve 3,300 individuals placing them in jobs with an average placement wage of \$27,500. It is also in the process of designing components to expand services to incumbent workers and new entrants. Additionally, it is hoped that the target region will be expanded in the near future to cover an even broader labor market.

Metro Tech was launched with pilots testing a new way of serving the project's customers. Employers needing trained employees came to the project stating how many positions they needed to fill, the training or certifications required for hiring, and (frequently) the training provider. The management team reviewed the proposal for appropriateness and, if the proposal was approved, the recruitment for training and hiring began. Employers committed up front to hiring the participants. In many cases the training was coupled with internships.

The project has also created a Core Tech Prep curriculum of 6 modules and 120 hours of training. This curriculum will be distributed to agencies throughout the region to increase the capacity to respond to skills shortages. Additionally, existing employees of the regional workforce development agencies staff the project. Metro Tech is providing staff development and a team style of management for these staff members. However, an explicit goal of the

project is to embed its practice and learning within the existing and on-going workforce development system.

With the successful completion of the pilot stages, Metro Tech has begun full-scale operations. Bill Carlson, the Metro Tech Director, states that the project turns traditional procedures of the old JTPA system inside out. It begins with real employer demand and custom designs the response to that demand. The tight labor market allows the project to recruit and place a wide range of participants including those who normally face labor market barriers. These participants enter the labor market with the skills and knowledge needed by actual employers offering real jobs paying good wages.

BELL ATLANTIC MULTI-STATE RECRUITMENT FOR TECHNICAL SKILLS

The Department of Labor's partnership with the Bell Atlantic Corporation to recruit employees for technical occupations represents an emerging model of public/private collaboration to address skill shortages. The goal is to recruit as many new employees as possible for technical and customer representative jobs across 10 states in the Bell Atlantic Corporation's New England and Mid-Atlantic regions. The State and local workforce development systems in these regions are the primary recruitment resource for the Bell Atlantic Corporation.

This private/public partnership is based on a mutual commitment to address skill shortages by reaching into the domestic labor market through the public workforce investment system. The partnership is a model of how to meet the challenges associated with a large-scale, multi-State response to skill shortages through building a long-term private/public working relationship. It does not involve a Federal grant to the Bell Atlantic Corporation.

The Bell Atlantic Corporation has rigorous standards for entry level hiring because entry-level employment is the threshold of a career ladder leading to high-paying technical and professional jobs, which are supported by extensive employer-sponsored training. A product of this collaboration will be evaluation and technical assistance resources that can be used throughout the workforce development system to serve employers with similar multi-State recruitment needs.

COMMUNICATION WORKERS OF AMERICA MILITARY TO WORK PROJECT

Military personnel can access this program through the Transition Assistance Program. This Internet program (<http://www.cwajobs.com>) allows transitioning service members and veterans to self-register, take an assessment test, and receive an evaluation of their technical abilities. The program is intended to help users determine the best job match for their skills, interest, and career goals for high technology jobs within the telecommunications industry. Cisco Systems joined the program in January 1999 and provides a sophisticated on-line assessment test.

Many telecommunications companies, including AT&T, Lucent Technologies, and PacBell are partnered with CWA and provide CWA information on available jobs. CWA personnel match the service member applications with the appropriate jobs and forward their resumes to the applicable company. Service members who have the aptitude but require additional training are directed to apprenticeship and skill certification programs. In collaboration with Stanley Community College, Cisco Systems also has included an on-line distance learning component that includes assessment and training for computer literacy, computer technology, and to become a Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA). Six occupations are available to job seekers: cable installation technician, network technician, personal computer support and applications assistant, local area network/wide area network technician, central office technician; and customer service representative.

HEALTH CARE INITIATIVES IN PHILADELPHIA:

Philadelphia Hospital and Health Care District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund And the Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation Regional Skills Alliance

Philadelphia Hospital and Health Care District 1199C Training and Upgrading Fund, established in 1974, is a sector-focused, single-union, multi-firm labor-management partnership that has a long history of providing its members higher skills to meet the changing needs of the health care industry. It is, in fact, among the largest union-based training operations in the nation. As the fund has grown in experience and programs, use by employers and workers increased dramatically.

Over the past two decades, tens of thousands of participants have become skilled graduates in programs ranging from registered nurse to medical technician to dentists and doctors. The Fund has provided programs for dislocated workers and welfare recipients and has offered competency-based occupational entry and upgrade training linked to credentials. It has also offered adult basic education, including GED preparation, a high school diploma from the City of Philadelphia School District, basic and advanced computer literacy training.

Last year, 1199C joined with the Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation, 60 area health care employers, 25 nursing schools, the area One Stop Career Center, AFSCME, and the AFL-CIO to launch a comprehensive “regional skills alliance”—a training initiative designed to address the growing shortage of skilled nurses in the Philadelphia area.

In addition to training, the project will offer a range of support services, such as career counseling, testing, assessment and job placement, much of it provided by the Training and Upgrading Fund.